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8
**Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne standing in a street in Soho 1967**
*Nationalgalerie, Berlin*

# Francis Bacon

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**November-December 1968**

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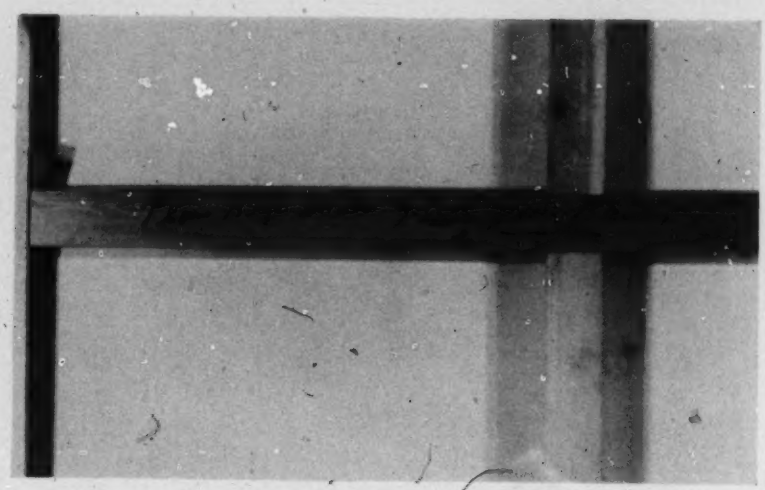
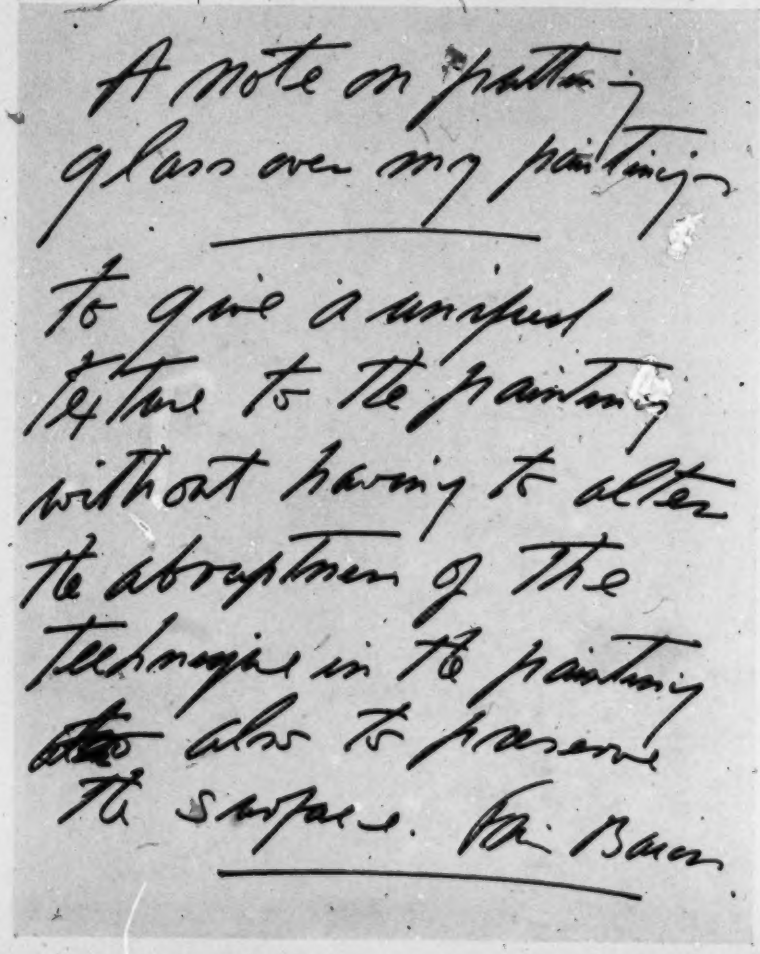


A note on putting glass over my paintings

To give a unified texture to the painting without having to alter the abruptness of the technique in the painting also to preserve the surface. Francis Bacon.

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## Francis Bacon

Born 1909 in Dublin, of English parents. Lived in Berlin and Paris in the late twenties. Designed furniture and rugs and worked occasionally as interior decorator. Self-taught, he began to paint in 1928, but worked intermittently for several years and destroyed most of his early work. Lived in Monte Carlo 1946-50. Awarded the 1967 Rubens Prize by the city of Siegen and the Carnegie Institute Award for painting at the 1967 Pittsburgh International. Travels in Europe and in North and South Africa. Lives and works in London.

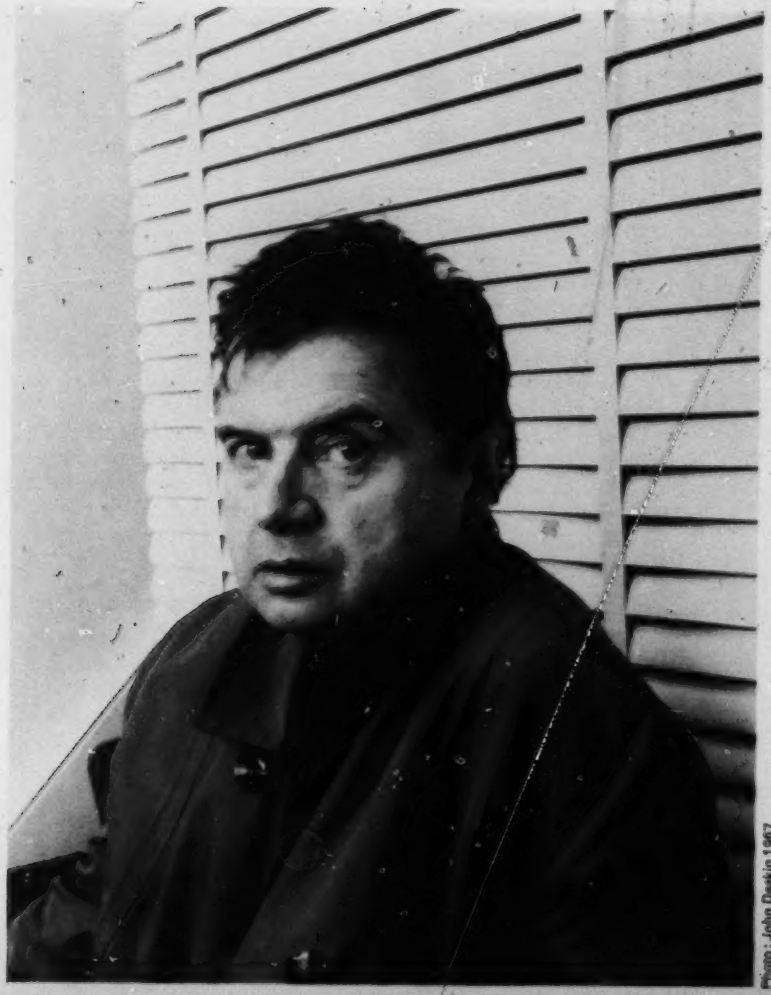


Photo: John Deakin 1967

The Directors of Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc. wish to express their warmest thanks to Dr Werner Haftmann, Director of the Nationalgalerie, Berlin and the anonymous Private Collectors who have very kindly lent paintings to this Exhibition.

They also wish to thank Professor Lawrence Gowing for his introductory Essay.

## The Irrefutable Image
by Lawrence Gowing

In London this year I have felt a distracting reverberation in the air. It is generated by the knowledge that a mile down the street, too close for comfort, Francis Bacon is in tremendous form, painting continuously and surely disturbing something that one would sooner leave settled. Every three or four weeks, as one hears, he telephones and another big canvas is collected, carried down his steep stairs and carted off out of the way, where nothing can happen to it. The dry, granular surfaces invite happenings; they are occurrences in themselves. Waiting for a new group of pictures I tremble a little, lose track of my thoughts, wake in the night. Every time the image that emerges can be counted on to strike directly at a vital and vulnerable sense. One has no way of preparing or protecting oneself. There is an uncommon kind of painting which, when it really penetrates, alters everything. For some unknown reason one's private view of oneself is at stake.

This is not a situation in which one has much taste (if one ever has) for art criticism. None of the customary attitudes to art seems to serve. Though we are prepared for any degree of passivity required of us – ready and willing by way of appreciation to dwell simply on the depth of our discomfiture, that still does not quite meet the case. Even with the most accessible of these pictures, when a head materialises quite directly out of the paint, with no special mood but an uneasy brooding, the trembling is apt to remain. There is an excitement that is not quite identifiable ; it is as hard to deal with as desire or fear. Very likely it is both or neither. Often the only words that come to mind when one is looking at Bacon's pictures are his own: *One always loves the story and the sensation to be cut down to its most elemental state. That's how one longs for one's friends to be, isn't it ? One can do so much without the padding.*

We are certainly not used to images that are so bare and immediate. Perhaps not to any images, except those that can be saddled with the proviso that the significance lies elsewhere, anywhere but in the actual existence of a physical subject. Bacon shows real bodies and real paint; there is nothing else to look at and nothing between them, no filter but the desperate chances of the brush. The intervening aesthetics, the 'treatment' that would permit a familiar mental set – and with it whatever preconceptions, whatever thoughts about art, whatever comfort one brought into the gallery with one – all these are jettisoned like so much padding. We hardly let them go willingly. Coping with the relics of resentment is admittedly part of the routine; no doubt one sometimes enjoys one's own supine magnanimity more than art. Bacon cuts too close to leave much comfort in this direction either. Yet in another, disused part of one there is a longing for this bare directness. One can detect in the trembling a symptom of hunger.

Bacon's remark, or his sequence of thought, is illuminating. A certain elemental and longed-for condition in painting is associated with the same condition in human beings. This is less like the current art-talk than ever, yet the analogy is full of meaning. Specifically, it is associated with one's friends. If one could transmit one fact that posterity will wish to know, it would be this – that, besides a great talent for painting, Francis Bacon has a great talent for friendship. There is a connection between them that is not altogether plain. This exhibition is made up of pictures of friends, a small group of friends of many years standing. Each has been painted often before. They are, virtually always, painted from memory. There is no obvious sign of characterisation or affection; the role of these models is altogether more basic. With familiarity the shape, the look and the private strangeness of a person have become imaginatively credible. Bacon knows them by heart.

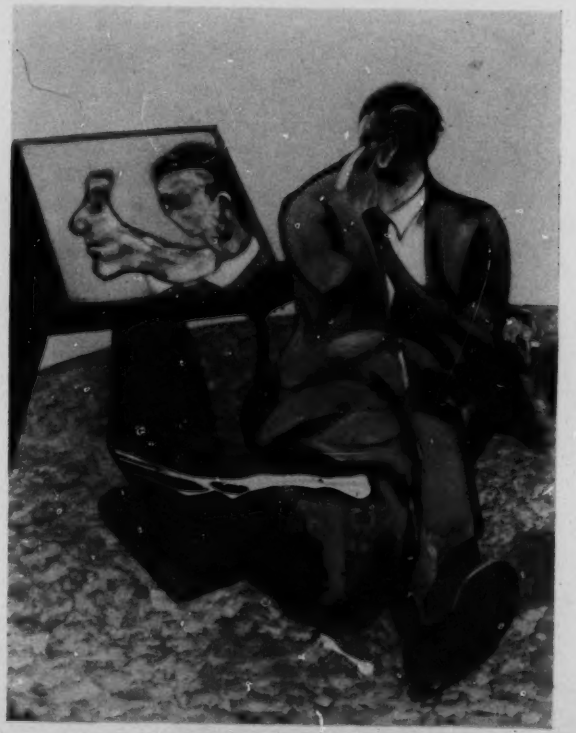
The equation between pictures and human beings is certainly at the root of Bacon's art. It changes continually, yet it remains characteristically his own and

unlike anything else in painting. For six or seven years it has been developing in one direction; the story and the sensation have centred more and more on the actual way that the figures materialize out of paint. The embodiment grew steadier, taking on sometimes a sunny extrovert solidity that is itself disconcerting. The appearance was deceptive: in the latest pictures, now that we have them, another point of desperate extremity seems near. Perhaps the direction is changing again.

Nevertheless, the basic character of these pictures lies in the figurative event. The point is how the image happens, the way we recognise a person in the paint. It is the nature of paint to be self-evident. When a thing is 'painted' it is captured or reborn in a substance that is endlessly protean, metaphoric, adhesive and elastic, infinitely fantastic. The equivalence itself is a unique, improbable fantasy of Western man. It is always more or less uncontrollable, impulsive and automatic. It is not for want of trying that no picture has quite been repeated since painting began. The stuff of painting remains beyond comprehension: it is unreasonable and disturbing that the whole message must reach us through the magic accident that happens to only one man. The intelligent painter watches himself like a stranger.

With Bacon the play of paint is for real. One imagines his special watchfulness as it throws up unthinkable kinds of resemblance. Time and again he is drawn into a fearful game of chicken – to stay with the paint at the perilous onset of likeness. It is played with the only stakes that are big enough to make it exciting, the indisputable equivalence of paint and flesh. The Dadaists first likened art to a game; if the paradox rebounded, it was because the charm of it depended on unawareness of the compulsive seriousness of play. Bacon's description of painting as the continuous deepening of a game that distracts man from his

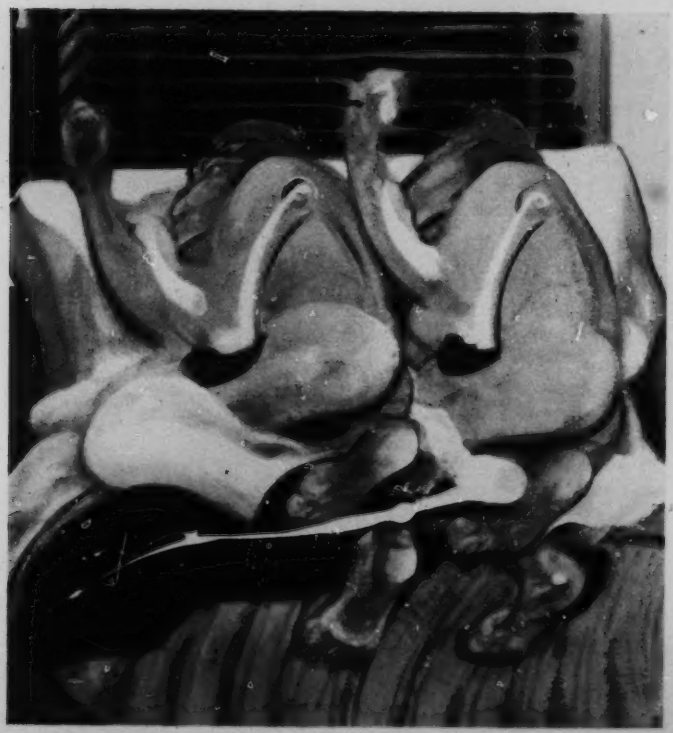
1
Portrait of George Dyer in a mirror (14) *detail*



mortality springs by contrast from a bitterly percipient frame of mind. But the impetus remains; a whole cultural apparatus has still to be dismantled. The illusory coherence must be split open, so that the real content, the irrefutable image bursts out. The body must become actual, with its real orifices and its arching, gaping rapture. At the crux, where the game must be lost to be worth playing, the body must be seen as it is, infested with the certainty of death. Everything has to be discovered afresh, wrested out of the paint, torn apart in the process. The movement of the brush is recognised as the movement of life. Still more, the kinetic blur and slip is the movement of perception, the actual visual act. The eye grasps, slides on and grasps again: the form is hollowed and stretched by the movement. A head, as the eye pursues it across the paint, may be scooped and pouched by the motion; it may be horned or tusked by it. Or else, as the vision claws at each side in turn, it is compressed, turned in on itself. Yet the impression is not of deformation, so much as the disjunct and cumulative reality of indubitable recognition. The incongruity resides in its nature; it is made that way.

A figure is generated by its movement. The *Portrait of George Dyer in a mirror*[1] is divided, as if interleaved, by a straight, bright division, which is both the edge of jacket and thigh and the frontier of a previous pose, the position before he turned quickly, folding in on himself and leaving his jacket flying, to look at his divided image in a mirror which is like a gay electronic picture box. The figures often revolve round a painted axis, or form out of spiralling curves that are plaited into a fat, resilient cable, the very substance of the physical equation. The *Two Figures lying on a Bed*[2] in the centre of a triptych (18) are also two identical phases in the visualisation of a single figure, enacted with a ritual solemnity. The same visual

2
2 figures lying on a bed
(18) *detail*



3
**Lying Figure with hypodermic syringe**
(15) *detail*

4
**Left-hand panel of Triptych** 1968
(18) *detail*

5
George Dyer staring into a mirror
(6) *detail*

movement forms the picture. In the latest, summary version of the *Lying Figure*[3] (15) it makes great parabolas that curve through space like a boomerang. The arena is dished and hollowed by the passage of the eye, which comes to rest at last on the figure, finding in it a kind of sombre triumph. When the paint itself breaks loose into a flowing white emanation, streaming away across the canvas (often beginning from the point of a knee), it is the intimation of a direction, a direction of movement or thought. Once lately the same kind of intimation has *leaked back into fact* in the shape of a flamingo.[4]

The colloquy between a man and his image continues. *George Dyer staring* (6)[5] finds himself darkly reflected in a mirror which is as much a canvas; the tall shape is bowed by his gaze. *Isabel Rawsthorne* (11) locks the door on a jewelled, orchidaceous incarnation of herself. Under the surface there is a recurrent meditation on the nature of an image. For all the substance of the paint, the resemblance is as fugitive as a reflection. It is like a fragile, imaginary membrane; stretched to show its features it tears apart. Displayed beside its model it is thin as paper. The likeness of life might be stripped off and nailed up like a skin to dry. Yet it is the indispensable counterpart of man, with its own complementary reality. Finally, in the last few months, it is recognised as an object in itself, separate, like a statuette. One could call it a fantastic visual pun, a pigment-figment. It has a special, grave life; it is a creature on its own. One could stand it about on coffee-tables, keep it as a pet.[6,7,8]

This is among Bacon's most memorable imaginings. One finds oneself moved, at first sight inexplicably. Yet, making the fantasy explicit and verbal, one is on the verge of twisting his meaning. We have his word for it that illustration and narrative are no part of his purpose. His habitual way with a picture is a reflection of his abhorrence of them. The great looping strokes of the brush are by no means

6
**Right-hand panel of Triptych** 1968
(18) *detail*

7
**2 studies of George Dyer with dog**
(12) *detail*

8
2 studies for a portrait of George Dyer
(17) *detail*

bravura flourishes; I have heard him say that on the contrary they are simply acts of separation, forcibly removing the image from the state that is felt to be illustrative. They carry it into another region, the area of self-evident paint. The intolerance and impatience are plain. One feels everywhere the urgency of the need *for returning fact on to the nervous system in a more violent way.* It may be that we need to know, in the head, only what he knows – the fact (as he said nearly twenty years ago when the epochal exhibition set the vultures circling) that *Painting is the pattern of one's own nervous system projected on to canvas.* It is the more *violent way* that keeps one wondering. One recognises a quality of event, which still resists description. Yet if we allow that it is just enigmatic, merely ominous (perhaps entertainingly so), the significance of Bacon's *attempt to make a certain type of feeling visual* may escape us. Perhaps this *certain type* is not his alone.

*It's a very close and difficult thing,* Bacon said to Sylvester, *to know why some paint comes across directly on to the nervous system and other paint tells you the story in a long diatribe through the brain.* Years later he was still talking about the way *the texture of a painting seems to come immediately on to the nervous system.* The habitual turn of phrase is indicative. The message, the fact or the texture, is said to *come on to* this system of his, as if on to the line, on to the wave-length, on to a programme or an ouija board. The system is tuned and waiting to receive it and give it a huge instinctive impetus. One recognises a kind of artist whose constitution works with the immediate force of a nervous reflex. Moreover it is a *system;* the nervous reaction and the pictorial response, the awareness of art itself, are embodied as if in an actual neural chain. The turn of phrase reflects a basic assurance that Bacon lives and paints with year by year. One has a sense of the kind of confidence that can accommodate despair. In terms of art, it is the

confidence that allows monstrous, random transformations without fear of expressionistic destructiveness. When the history of artistic philosophy is written, it will be seen that this courage is the region of Bacon's immense originality. Or one of them . . . The expressionist impasse, which closed a whole range of natural meaning to art, turns out to be no impasse at all. It was merely a temporary failure of the nervous system.

The interpretation of Bacon's pictures as illustrations is repugnant to him; that is not what he means by *the story*. The common view of them as horrific seems to him to mistake them utterly. Possibly he asks for it. It is true that the police (as Constant Lambert remarked for some reason about Stravinsky) do not arrest everyone who owns up to a murder. But it is useless to look at painting in a mood of clean-minded forbearance. Some of the semblance of erotic cruelty in the past was in fact part of the image of a particular man. But, even if we avert our thoughts from the dramas without narrative that fill the triptychs, there remains the pervading quality of the *more violent way*. When Bacon provoked the tasteful by giving one of interlocked nudes in a Crucifixion triptych a swastika armband,[9] his explanation was interesting. . . . *It was done entirely as a part of trying to make the figure work. Not work on the level of interpretation of its being a Nazi, but on the level of its working formally*. We become aware of a level on which a wrist watch or spectacles are as political, as violent even, as an armband. Anything fastened to a body works with it and against it. Clothes and the air that a man arrogates to himself when he wears them; equally, the role that a body assumes naked; a bandaged splint, the straps of a knapsack, cloth cap or a biretta, for that matter – all of them are obviously material to the *working* of a physical image. The physical legibility of painting had shrunk out of

9
**Right-hand panel of Crucifixion Triptych** 1965
*not in exhibition*
Bayerische Staatsgemälde Sammlungen
Munich
*Detail*

all recognition. Bacon recovers the kind of bodily substance that one can feel in one's own nervous system.

A couple of years ago the centre of a marvellous portrait[10] was made to work by a wrist watch that recurred in successive circles and ellipses across a tangle of forearms. The same figure bears a spectacle-like ellipse poised with a momentary exactness in front of one alternative shadowy eye. It is no more descriptive than the swastika. ('When I put down green I do not mean grass', Matisse said, 'When I put down blue I do not mean sky.') The paint itself, in the course of its role of trapping the likeness alive, generates the badge for an eye, like the badge for a biceps or the dial that is a badge for the wrist, to mark the form with its real nervous connotation, the story and the feeling all together. The spectacle-ellipses often appear in Bacon's portraits. They begin as badges for the recurrent theme of vision. Then they are dislodged, lying black and incongruous against the cheek or under the ear, the emblems of the pervading discomposure. They do not mean pince-nez – unless sometimes indirectly they mean a memory of Eisenstein's famous nurse and a situation that is in some intimate sense catastrophic. The nurse herself had strange premonitory wisps of hair that made ellipses on her forehead and in front of her ear, the kind of clues that await a good painter. In the last month or two, a sign of the change, the optical ellipses have begun to be absorbed back again into symbolic almond-eyes.

Bacon has identified an order of physical embodiment that is suddenly central and indispensable. The discovery itself is physical; the violence is inherent and a debonair recklessness goes with it. Incongruities that are immaterial to the realisation mean nothing, unless there is a careless pride in them. The optical ellipses may give the head on some friend's massive shoulders the look (on the illustrative level) of a *précieux dégouté*. It has no more to do with the life of the

10
**Portrait of George Dyer staring at a blind cord**
1966
*not in exhibition*
*Detail*

form than Satie's title had to do with the elemental essence of his *Trois Valses*. Possibly it betrays an antipathy to what is noble and sentimental in portraiture – analogous to Satie's reaction to Ravel. Pressed to say that the armband might be seen as an anecdote about Nazis or a brothel, he answered, *I don't think I cared much about it.* When, for my own prurient reasons, I asked about the erotic implication of the cruelty and its trappings that appear in his imagery at its grandest moments, the answer was, *It is just part of my nervous system.* It is indeed simply incidental to quite another continuing incentive. The delight is in the realisation. *What I really love,* he said, *is the way of its own accord paint makes things . . . . The way in that Constable the flakes of paint as they happen to fall make a horse.*

It looks more and more as if everything in Bacon's pictures is the outcome of a single concern – the intrinsic quality of the figurative event. He would be very content, I think, for us to disregard any other event whatsoever. It is clear enough that the spectacle-ellipses and everything else are discomposed by some unimaginable emergency. Yet usually there is no particular threat. If there is, it is discovered in a kind of lull, a moment of stillness that is by contrast idyllic; it is further off, at one more remove. The sense of eventuality is quite different. It is everywhere; it still permeates the scene when a man, only a little morosely restive, is merely sitting for his portrait. It is the very event that makes vivid and immediate the semblance of life. The fateful happening is simply the occurrence of an image, wrested out of the paint. It is in itself the real drama; for Bacon there is only this one emergency, the actual emergence of the human likeness.

The certain type of feeling which is made visual is no more or less than the apprehension of the intimate enormity of a painted figure. Embedded in Bacon's nervous system there is an instinct for the emotional extremity of the point at which life is identified in paint. It is an intuition of the truth, the real equation that painting rests on. Equally, it is a sense of profound need ; the pictures ache with it. This is the kind of intuition that makes us see painting afresh. The violence of painting, for instance, is never entirely what it appears.

Pictures of the Crucifixion are never, absolutely never, pictures of an actual death by torture. Look round a gallery; no one was executed like this. (The single apparent exception, the Grünewald, in fact shows death from a fearful disease that was suffered in the hospital where the picture stood.) Yet we cannot doubt that our awareness of what is wonderful in human flesh as well as what is grievous has needed these ideal presentations of the body. It is not hanging – standing rather, stretched not merely in token of the story but spread in weightless suspension by the very conditions of the image. It is elevated in the unique imaginative zone that displays the reality of the body and the reality of painting. The tension in it is not the torture; the body is stretched for painting, stretched like the canvas. We feel no profanity if the writhing is erotic. There is no contradiction; at the crux all the meanings of passion are the same. There is nothing horrifying; we are happy, unless we are losing courage, to identify in the old Crucifixions, at the summit of the grief and blessing, a different application of physical imagery, an elemental and intimate one. The cult and the art evolved together to cherish a visible and physical equation – a special zone of bodily realisation and an ideally real use of paint. They are inherent in the nature of painting as we know it – if we know it – and in the nature of Western man.

It is easy to recognise in the old Crucifixions a mode of realisation that is precious to us. Violence is of its essence, yet it is metaphoric: it is a quality of the act to which the body yields itself, yet the body, quite visibly, yields itself only to representation. The opposite mode, similarly, is not what it seems. Portraiture is person-to-person painting. It is the order of painting in which model and painter

specifically recognise one another's existence. It is the mode in which two people visibly interact. Apparently they are active and passive – yet the painter equally lays himself open. The model unsheaths and preserves a force that is fearsome, a force that is found to reside in human aspect. Portraits are pictures of physical proximity; there is attraction and repulsion in every one of them. What is called distortion is essential to them; looking across a room there is no single image to paint. The shock of Bacon's pictures is in part simply discovering the actual emotional flavour of representation without the cultural varnish, the real flavour of painting. It is without doubt a strong one; it is perhaps easier to imagine how a civilisation might lose its taste for the diet (as we nearly did lose it) than how it developed the taste in the first place, alone among the civilisations of the earth. But this is only part of the trembling. There is surely a realisation that is, in this extreme form, new, an acute awareness that is feared as well as longed for.

The great originals recover and relive something, perhaps many things, buried and hidden inside the snowballing legacy of art. We know the fact well, yet it has often a sound of doubletalk or hindsight. Moreover, an original artist's way with tradition normally appears clumsy, frivolous or destructive; that is how the filial relationship is naturally expressed. Embedded in Bacon's nervous system, with everything else, there is a deep and instinctive deposit of history. But what he has derived from it is by no means historical. It is (perhaps . . .) a sense that man's image and his body are on some deep level identical. Imagery is regarded as a sense, a physical organ through which we feel and gain fragmentary, marvellously vivid intimations of real existence. And so of course it is, figuratively speaking. But here it is a matter of fact and paint; at the crux it turns out that all the meanings of *figurative* are the same. The themes are the immediacy of the flesh – the sensate head, the face with its orifices that Leonardo called love's prison, in a mood that is not far from Bacon's – and, on the other hand, the separate imaginative model for the integrity of the body. It is found that both of them are at the same time patterns of art and patterns of the nervous system.

In reforming these patterns Bacon seizes on every anarchic suggestion that oil paint offers. Nevertheless he understands in painting the orderly quality of a rite. He is a master of ceremonious symmetry and the solemn procession of visual tones. Sometimes he used to mimic the devout, like playing at funerals. Now the game is his own, but the understanding remains a part of his nervous system. At intervals in his work the rite of representation is celebrated again according to the old observance. The liturgy has withered away but the certain type of feeling must still be made visual. The body must be made visibly and terribly real, which means it must materialise out of paint with all the signs of its life and fate. This was always the point of painting and for Bacon there is no other.

. . . *We are,* he once remarked, *in very primitive times once again.* He has had to discover the conditions of figure painting over again on an elemental level. Yet they are not unlike the old conditions in which the image of the body was faithfully and fearfully realised and fixed. The body is submitted to representation; it must be exposed to it. It may be lifted up and exhibited for it as in a menagerie, or offered up as if on a throne or an altar, displayed as if for ritual or surgery, or simply in self-abandonment. Obliquely, Bacon has explained the meaning of the model's pose; he has always had *a book that has influenced me very much called 'Positioning in Radiography'* . . . In his pictures the body is positioned for representation. It may be spreadeagled for it, or bound down for it, or pinned and transfixed, or locked for it quivering in struggle or love. Or it may be projected against the receptive canvas itself, as if on a fluorescent screen. It is

fixed in the pose and the role that yields this special equivalence, transporting the reality of the body into paint.

Yet as one watches the event is changing. (How can one write without trying to brace oneself against the possibility, indeed the certainty, that painting, at the moment of one's genuflection, will pull away the carpet?) There is a continual and necessary restlessness. The semblance of modelling and the sequence of tones that spells 'good painting' and builds a head so solidly for Bacon may at any moment become too predictable, too reasonable to carry the meaning. The *good* of painting must enfold the *bad* and carry along with it what is intolerable. Who knows if the essence is visible? At times only a skeletal structure, the X-ray bones in the positioning, will be credible and crude enough to serve. The realisation that what is created in paint is a creature leads in just the other direction. In the three latest *Studies of Isabel Rawsthorne* (19)[11] physical fact is progressively disembodied. Within its fretted blue-black border of hair, the living membrane of the likeness (which first appeared pinned to the wall, eight months before), takes on its own symbolic reality. The imagination stirs in that aching hole that Redon contrived for art. Some possibilities are by definition mysterious; there is nothing for it but to wait for the next pictures. We do not have to assess painting or praise it; it is enough to admit to ourselves that we cannot do without it.

© Lawrence Gowing 1968

11
**3 studies of Isabel Rawsthorne**
(19) *right-hand panel*

## One-man exhibitions

| | |
|---|---|
| 1934 | Transition Gallery, London |
| 1949 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1950 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1951-52 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1952-53 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1953 | Durlacher Bros., New York |
| 1953 | Beaux Arts Gallery, London |
| 1954 | British Pavilion, Venice Biennale |
| 1954 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1955 | Institute of Contemporary Arts, London |
| 1955 | Hanover Gallery, London (with Scott and Sutherland) |
| 1957 | Galerie Rive Droite, Paris |
| 1957 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1958 | Galleria Galatea, Turin (afterwards at the Galleria d'Ariete, Milan, and L'Obelisco, Rome) |
| 1958 | Arts Council touring exhibition *Three Masters of Modern British Painting*, with Matthew Smith and Pasmore |
| 1959 | Richard Feigen Gallery, Chicago |
| 1959 | Hanover Gallery, London |
| 1959 | V Bienal, São Paulo |
| 1960 | Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London |
| 1960 | University of California at Los Angeles (with Hyman Bloom) |
| 1961 | Nottingham University, Nottingham |
| 1962 | Tate Gallery, London. Modified versions of this exhibition were afterwards shown at the Kunsthalle, Mannheim; Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin; Kunsthaus, Zurich; and (in 1963) at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam |
| 1962 | Galleria d'Arte Galatea, Milan |
| 1963 | Galleria il Centro, Naples (with Sutherland) |
| 1963 | Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London |
| 1963 | Granville Gallery, New York |
| 1963 | Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York |
| 1965 | Travelling Exhibition: Kunsthalle, Hamburg; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. |
| 1965 | Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London |
| 1966 | Toninelli Arte Moderna, Milan |
| 1966-67 | Travelling Exhibition: Galerie Maeght, Paris; Marlborough Galleria d'Arte, Rome; Toninelli Arte Moderna, Milan. Enlarged version at Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London March-April |
| 1967 | Rubens Prize Exhibition, Siegen, W. Germany |

## Principal bibliography

John Rothenstein and Ronald Alley *Francis Bacon* Catalogue Raisonné, Thames & Hudson, London and The Viking Press Inc; New York 1964. 27 colour plates. 260 monochrome plates.

## Forthcoming publication – Spring 1969

John Russell *Francis Bacon* World of Art Library, Thames & Hudson, London.

## Films

*Francis Bacon Paintings 1944-1961*. Directed by David Thompson. Produced by the Arts Council, London, 1961. Samaritan Films. Gala Film Distributors, London.

*Francis Bacon. Interviews with David Sylvester*. Directed by Michael Gill for BBC Television, London, 1966.

## Catalogue

The paintings are listed in chronological order

**1** *Illustrated on page 25*
**Portrait of George Dyer riding a bicycle** 1966
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

Exhibited: 'Francis Bacon' Marlborough Fine Art, London, March-April 1967, no. 14

*Private collection, New York*

**2** *Illustrated on page 27*
**4 studies for a Self-portrait** 1967
Oil on canvas
36 × 13 in / 91·5 × 33 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

Exhibited: 'Recent Acquisitions' Marlborough Fine Art, London, July-August 1967, no. 2

*Private collection, Italy*

**3** *Illustrated on page 29*
**3 studies from the human body** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

Exhibited: 'Rosc' Royal Dublin Society, Dublin, Nov-Dec 1967, no. 8

**4** *Illustrated on page 31*
**2 figures on a couch** 1967
Oil on canvas
61 × 55 in / 155 × 140 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

Exhibited: 'Recent Acquisitions' Marlborough Fine Art, London, July-August 1967, no. 3

*Private collection, Italy*

**5** *Illustrated on page 33*
**Study for a portrait** 1967
Oil on canvas
61 × 55 in / 155 × 140 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

Exhibited: *hors concours* 'John Moores Exhibition' Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool Nov 1967-Jan 1968

**6** *Illustrated on page 35*
**Portrait of George Dyer staring into a mirror** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

*Private collection, Venezuela*

7 *Illustrated on page 37*
**Study for a Portrait on a revolving chair** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

Exhibited: 'Rosc' Royal Dublin Society, Dublin, Nov-Dec 1967, no. 7

*Private collection, Germany*

8 *Illustrated on frontispiece*
**Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne standing in a street in Soho** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

*Collection Nationalgalerie, Berlin*

9 *Illustrated on page 39*
**Portrait of George Dyer and Lucian Freud** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

Exhibited: New Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester University, April-June 1968

10 *Illustrated on page 41*
**Triptych** 1967
Inspired by T. S. Eliot's poem 'Sweeney Agonistes'
Oil and pastel on canvas
each, 78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

11 *Illustrated on page 43*
**3 studies of Isabel Rawsthorne** 1967
Oil on canvas
47 × 60 in / 119·5 × 152·5 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

Exhibited: 'Recent Acquisitions' Marlborough Fine Art, London, July-August 1968, no. 6

12 *Illustrated on page 45*
**2 studies of George Dyer with dog** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

Exhibited: 'The Obsessive Image' Institute of Contemporary Arts, Nash House Gallery, London, April-May 1968, no. 4
'Recent Acquisitions' Marlborough Fine Art ,London, July-August 1968, no. 7

13 *Illustrated on page 47*
**Man getting up from a chair** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**14** *Illustrated on page 49*
**Portrait of George Dyer in a mirror** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**15** *Illustrated on page 51*
**Version no. 2 of Lying Figure with hypodermic syringe** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**16** *Illustrated on page 53*
**Portrait of Lucian Freud** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**17** *Illustrated on page 55*
**2 studies for a portrait of George Dyer** 1968
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**18** *Illustrated on page 57*
**Triptych** 1968
2 figures lying on a bed with attendants
Oil on canvas
each, 78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher

**19** *Illustrated on page 59*
**3 studies of Isabel Rawsthorne** 1968
Oil on canvas
each, 14 × 12 in / 35·5 × 30·5 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas

**20** *Illustrated on page 59*
**3 studies for portraits** 1968
Oil on canvas
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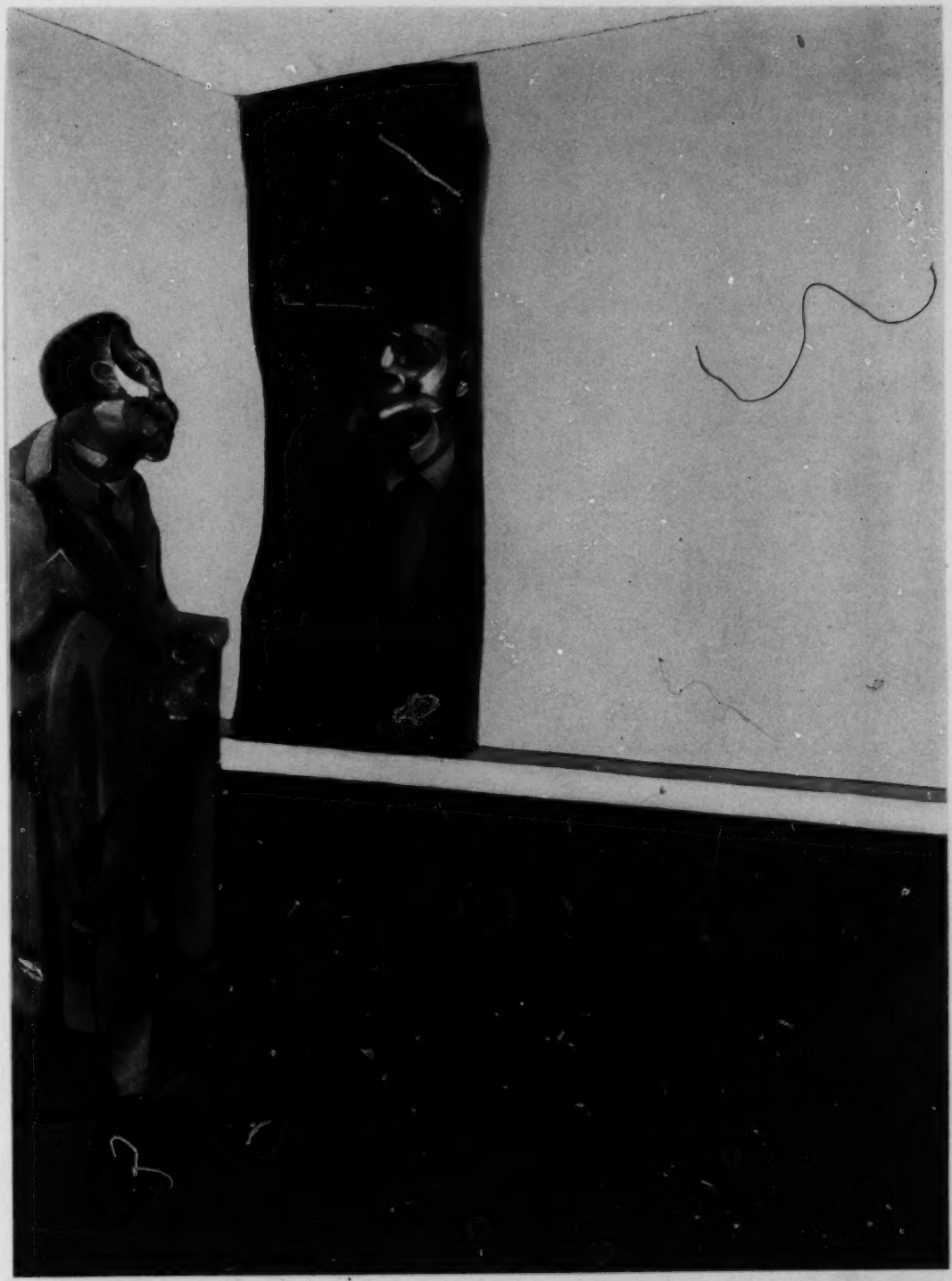
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
*Private collection, Venezuela*



**7**
**Study for a Portrait on a revolving chair** 1967
Oil on canvas
78 × 58 in / 198 × 147 cm
Entitled and dated on back of canvas
Signed on the stretcher.

Exhibited: 'Rosc' Royal Dublin Society, Dublin, Nov-Dec 1967, no. 7

*Private collection, Germany*

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Entitled and dated on back of canvas

## Francis Bacon paintings in American Museums and Institutions

Study for crouching Nude 1952
The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1955

Study for Portrait of Van Gogh III 1957
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation Collection, New York

Man with Dog 1953
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1955
Gift of Seymour H. Knox

Study for Portrait VI 1953
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Study for Portrait of Van Gogh V 1957
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation Collection, New York

Figure with Meat 1954
The Art Institute of Chicago, 1956

Study for Portrait V 1953
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation Collection, New York

Van Gogh in a Landscape 1957
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation Collection, New York

Walking Figure 1960
Dallas Museum of Contemporary Arts, 1960
Foundation for the Arts Collection

Sphinx 1954
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, New York

Self-portrait 1958
The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation Collection, New York

Three Studies for a Crucifixion 1962
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1965

Painting 1946
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1956

Study for Portrait VII 1953
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1956
Gift of Mr and Mrs William A. M. Burden

Study for Portrait of Henrietta Moraes 1964
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1964

Dog 1952
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1953
William A. M. Burden Fund

Sphinx II 1953
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, 1958
Gift of Stephen Carlton Clark

Landscape 1952
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1956

Study for Portrait IV 1953
Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, 1955

Study of Figure in a Landscape 1952
The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., 1955

## Paintings by Francis Bacon can be seen in the following public collections overseas

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Great Britain and Northern Ireland** | Aberdeen | Art Gallery and Industrial Museum |
| | Batley | The Bagshaw Art Gallery |
| | Belfast | City Art Gallery |
| | Birmingham | City Art Gallery |
| | Leeds | Temple Newsam House |
| | Leicester | Museums and Art Gallery |
| | London | The Arts Council and The Tate Gallery |
| | Newcastle-upon-Tyne | Kings College Hatton Gallery |
| | Oxford | Pembroke College |
| **Australia** | Adelaide | National Gallery of South Australia |
| | Melbourne | The National Gallery of Victoria |
| **Belgium** | Ghent | Museum voor Schone Kunsten |
| **Canada** | Ottawa | The National Gallery of Canada |
| **France** | Paris | Centre National d'Art Contemporain |
| **Germany** | Berlin | Nationalgalerie |
| | Bochum | Städtische Kunstgalerie |
| | Düsseldorf | Kunstsammlung Nordrhein- Westfalen |
| | Hamburg | Kunsthalle |
| | Hanover | Niedersächsische Landesgalerie |
| | Mannheim | Kunsthalle |
| | Munich | Bayerische Staatsgemälde Sammlungen |
| | Stuttgart | Staatsgalerie |
| **Holland** | Amsterdam | Stedelijk Museum |
| | Rotterdam | Boymans-Van Beuningen Museum |
| **Israel** | Jerusalem | The National Museum |
| **Japan** | Nagaoka | Contemporary Art Museum |
| **Sweden** | Stockholm | Moderna Museet |

# Some Museums and Public Institutions which have purchased Works of Art from the various Marlborough Galleries

## In North America

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis
Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo
Baltimore Museum of Art
Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina
The Art Institute of Chicago
Lannan Foundation, Chicago
Ohio State University, Columbus
Irwin Sweeney Miller Foundation, Columbus
The Cleveland Museum of Art
Dallas Museum of Fine Arts
Dayton Art Institute, Ohio
Denver Art Museum
Detroit Institute of Fine Arts, Detroit
Beaverbrook Foundation, Fredericton, NB
Southern Illinois University
Herron Museum of Art, Indianapolis
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City
Los Angeles County Museum
The Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire
Memphis State University
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
The Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, New Orleans
American-Israel Cultural Foundation, New York City
Lincoln Center for Performing Arts, New York City
Museum of Modern Art, New York City
The Charles Rand Penney Foundation, Olcott, New York
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York City
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City
Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha
The Art Gallery of Ontario
Pasadena Museum of Art, Pasadena
The Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh
Princeton University Art Gallery, Princeton
City Art Museum of St. Louis, Missouri
San Francisco Museum of Art
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Museu de São Paulo
The North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh
Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota
Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio
Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica
Corcoran Gallery, Washington, DC
The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC
Colby College Art Museum, Waterville, Maine
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven

## In Europe and other countries

Aberdeen Art Gallery
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Kunstmuseum, Basle
Cecil Higgins Museum, Bedford
Ulster Museum, Belfast
Galerie des 20. Jahrhunderts, Berlin
Staatsgalerie, Berlin-Dahlem
Kunsthaus, Berne
The Barber Institute, Birmingham
City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham
Städtische Kunstgalerie, Bochum
Museum and Art Gallery, Bolton
Kunsthalle, Bremen
City Art Gallery, Bristol
Musée des Beaux Arts, Brussels
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
National Museum of Wales, Cardiff
Municipal Museum of Modern Arts, Carrara
Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne
Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt
National University Museum, Dublin
Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum der Stadt Duisburg, Duisburg
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Folkwang Museum, Essen
Konstmuseum, Gothenburg
Niedersächsische Landesgalerie, Hanover
Gemeente Museum, The Hague
Kunsthalle, Hamburg
Konsthall, Helsinki
Marie-Louise and Gunnar Didrichsen Art Foundation, Helsinki
Ferens Art Gallery, Hull
Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe
City Art Gallery, Leicester
Städtisches Museum Leverkusen, Leverkusen
The National Gallery, London
The Stuyvesant Foundation, London
The Tate Gallery, London
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester
Felton Bequest, Melbourne
Bayrische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderne, Rome
Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam
Moderna Museet, Stockholm
Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart
Musée de Beaux Arts la Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland
Museo Civico, Venice
Albertina, Vienna
Österreichische Galerie, Belvedere, Vienna
Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna
The Western Australian Art Gallery, Perth, WA
National Gallery of New Zealand, Wellington
Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal
Kunsthaus, Zürich

**Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc**
41 East 57th Street New York

**Agents for:**
Yaacov Agam
Mordecai Ardon
Naum Gabo
Juan Genovés
Adolph Gottlieb
Philip Guston
R B Kitaj
Lee Krasner
Jacques Lipchitz
Seymour Lipton
Conrad Marca-Relli
Gerhard Marcks
Robert Motherwell
Beverly Pepper
Larry Rivers
James Rosati
Mark Rothko
Julius Schmidt
Jesus Raphael Soto
James Wines
Fritz Wotruba
The Estate of William Baziotes
The Estate of Franz Kline
The Estate of David Smith
The Estate of John Marin
The Estate of Jackson Pollock

**Marlborough Fine Art (London) Ltd**
39 Old Bond Street London W1

**Agents for:**
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Frank Auerbach
Francis Bacon
Lynn Chadwick
Lucian Freud
Günter Haese
Barbara Hepworth
Oskar Kokoschka
Richard Lin
Lucebert
Meier-Denninghoff
Henry Moore
Sidney Nolan
Victor Pasmore
Roland Piché
John Piper
Paul Rebeyrolle
Ceri Richards
Graham Sutherland
Joe Tilson
Keith Vaughan
Brett Whiteley
The Estate of Willi Baumeister
The Estate of David Bomberg
The Estate of Kurt Schwitters

**Marlborough Galleria d'Arte**
via Gregoriana 5 Rome

**Agents for:**
Pietro Consagra
Piero Dorazio
Gastone Novelli
Achille Perilli
Arnaldo Pomodoro
Toti Scialoia
The Estate of Spazzapan
The Estate of Fontana

**Some past exhibitions of interest organised by Marlborough Fine Art (London) Ltd**

1951 Complete Collection of Degas Bronzes
1952 Theodore Géricault
1953 Gustave Courbet
1953 Mary Cassat
1954 Roussel, Bonnard, Vuillard
1954 Claude Monet
1955 Benatov
1955 Picasso Drawings and Bronzes
1955 Pissarro, Sisley
1955 Fernand Léger
1956 Renoir
1956 Constantin Guys
1956 Gleizes
1957 Henri Laurens
1958 Juan Gris
1958 Paul Signac
1958 Boudin
1959 Art in Revolt, Germany, 1905-25
1960 James Ensor
1960 E W Nay
1960 Francis Bacon
1960 Van Gogh Self Portraits
1960 Mathieu
1961 Moholy Nagy
1961 Henry Moore Stone and Wood Carvings
1962 Painters of the Bauhaus
1962 Van Gogh's Life in his Drawings and his Relationship with Signac
1962 Fantin-Latour
1962 André Masson
1962 Vantongerloo
1963 Lucian Freud
1963 Kurt Schwitters
1963 Corot
1963 Francis Bacon and Henry Moore
1964 Mark Rothko
1964 John Piper
1964 Keith Vaughan
1964 Egon Schiele
1965 Art in Britain 1930-40
1965 Kenneth Armitage
1965 Francis Bacon and Henry Moore
1965 Ceri Richards
1965 Gustav Klimt
1965 Günter Haese
1966 Piero Dorazio
1966 Joe Tilson
1966 Richard Lin
1966 Lucebert
1966 Joan Miró
1966 Victor Pasmore
1966 Klee and Nolde
1966 Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore Shelter Sketch Book 1940-42
1966 Lynn Chadwick
1966 Kandinsky and his Friends
1967 Frank Auerbach
1967 Juan Genovés
1967 Francis Bacon
1967 Roland Piché
1967 Paul Maze and his Friends
1967 Ben Nicholson
1967 Henry Moore Carvings
1967 Brett Whiteley
1967 Barlach and Kollwitz
1968 Helen Lessore and the Beaux Arts
1968 Lucian Freud
1968 Graham Sutherland A Bestiary
1968 Sidney Nolan
1968 Pissarro in England
1968 Feininger and Moholy Nagy
1968 Herbert Bayer
1968 Ben Nicholson

**Some past exhibitions of interest organised by Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc, New York**

1964 Alberto Burri
1964 Fritz Wotruba
1964 Jackson Pollock
1964 Mondrian, de Stijl and their impact
1964 Rebeyrolle
1964 David Smith
1965 Sidney Nolan
1965 R B Kitaj
1965 Seymour Lipton
1965 Ben Nicholson
1965 Arnaldo Pomodoro
1966 Adolph Gottlieb
1966 Wassily Kandinsky
1966 Jacques Lipchitz
1966 Barbara Hepworth
1966 Yaacov Agam
1966 Julius Schmidt and Peter Stroud
1966 Oskar Kokoschka
1966 Henri Laurens
1967 Lucio Fontana
1967 Franz Kline
1967 Ardon
1967 Gio Pomodoro
1967 Pietro Consagra
1967 Victor Pasmore
1967 Juan Genovés
1968 Lipchitz The Cubist Period
1968 International Expressionism
1968 Brett Whiteley
1968 Barlach and Kollwitz

**Some past exhibitions of interest organised by Marlborough Galleria d'Arte Rome**

1962 Jackson Pollock
1963 Alberto Burri
1963 Jean Dubuffet
1964 Emilio Vedova
1964 Gio Pomodoro
1964 Lucio Fontana
1964 Kurt Schwitters
1964 Piero Dorazio
1965 Arnaldo Pomodoro
1965 Oskar Kokoschka
1965 Henry Moore
1965 Giulio Turcato
1965 Beverly Pepper
1966 Klimt-Schiele
1966 Luigi Spazzapan
1966 Toti Scialoia
1966 Gastone Novelli
1967 Pietro Consagra
1967 Giacomo Manzù
1967 Ben Nicholson
1967 Joe Tilson
1967 Achille Perilli
1963 Beverly Pepper

**Cat. no. 241**
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LIBRARY

*Illustrated inside covers*
The Artist in his studio 1866

**Marlborough-Gerson**
Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc
41 East 57th Street
New York 10022
Telephone: Plaza 2-5353
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# Francis Bacon